

Informant: FMP-S1

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2-17-01, pp.1-2, [S1 talks about the spirits that he calls for guidance]

CJH: He says he would like to tell us about the spirits that talk to him and help him. That's why this is here, because he's welcoming the spirits that guide him and help him.

PP: Yeah let's do that.

S1 We always begin in the name of God and the spirits of Sister M L who is deceased. She was a Guatemalan spiritual healer from San Juan del Rio, Samayac, Huistepeques. It was called the San Juan river because she had her spiritual center there.

CJH: Near the river?

S1 Yes, she was a woman like no other. She could tell you just by reading the water. She would concentrate like this from 8:30 in the morning to 6:00 in the afternoon, having been given only a tablespoon of water to drink in the afternoon. She saw an average of 300 persons a day. When she worked, it was by appointment, there was a church bigger than that one and 200-800 people would go there from Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and where ever.

CJH: By appointment?

S1 No not by appointment, they come to see her. She worked Thursdays and Fridays and on Mondays she would do cleansings with doves for the sick, like for children. That woman was the one that gave me my place of business, along with F G, at the entrance of Samayac El Camino Adoquin, Encanto de San Francisco. He is my uncle F. And my uncle who was in San Pedro Apocapa, F F, who also worked using a glass of water. He healed sickness and worked with San Antonio. He did not concentrate, he just passed things over [a person] and took out animals and he too is deceased. Brother R, who only asked for one votive candle (veladora) had a huge spiritual center that really existed, it is not a lie, look he saw 400 people. He worked from 12:00 at night to 4:00 in the morning.

CJH: From 12:00 at night to 4:00 in the morning?

S1 From 12:00 to 4:00 in the morning. He never had a saint. He doesn't have a saint. He works by way of a mirror. You enter here (points to the doorway which is in front of him to his left) and exit there (points to where another door would be), you speak only one or two words right behind him as he is looking at your image in mirror and telling you everything. He died in an accident last year. He was my good friend- R de Cuyatenango, Samayac, Mazatenango. Yes, he was a very famous spiritual healer (curandero) whom Italians and the French would visit. He was a person of about 45 years old. He was excellent. I think at this moment they are here right now because I can feel it.

CJH: You feel them?

S1 Yes. They are B R, B G, S MLS, S C, another deceased woman, they were good, very good.

CJH: Were they the people who helped you?

S1 They are the ones who help me because I always ask them to help me and they come to help me and tell me everything.

CJH: And when they were alive?

S1 They helped me then too.

CJH: Did they teach you?

S1 They taught me and would tell me what was good and what was not good. Yes.

CJH: They gave you daily advice?

S1 Yes, but they, all of the good ones, are gone. They are gone, the oldest has been gone 3 years, B F, an uncle, has been gone 1 ½ years, B R has been gone 1 year and 8 months, B F, my uncle from San Pedro Apocapa, who worked with San Antonio, died too, about 5 years ago.

CJH: How many?

S1 My mother who I also call for, whose name is RF, may she rest in peace, she has been dead for 40 years.

CJH: Did your mom also teach you?

S1 Yes, I always ask for her and my brother who died in the '76 Guatemalan earthquake and a deceased woman named FO and brother SS from Zunil and the one from San Andres Itzapa.

CJH: The one from Zunil and the one from Itzapa.

S1 San Andres Itzapa.

CJH: San Andres.

S1 San Andres Itzapa and Zunil. I ask them to help me and to give me clairvoyance so I can say things.

CJH: About how many times a year do you give them this honor?

S1 I always give it to them, the only thing is that when you guys have come I haven't done it.

CJH: Oh, then this is something that you always do?

S1 I always do it.

CJH: And today we have the luck to be present?

S1 Yes, but when you guys have come they are not here.

CJH: They're not here

S1 This is something that, to see MS you had to be there 3 days before you got to see her. She did not give private consultations. She gave consultation in a big church, she only had the Holy Death, baby Jesus, a goblet like that one, but bigger, all in a corner. The table was very big, about 5 meters long. When one enters with her all the flowers begin to tremble, the winds cross each other, the flowers cross each other and embrace and the crown of San Pascual who is the Holy Death, begins to move and jump. She began working giving consultations at 8:30.

CJH: 8:30 a.m.?

S1 Yes, 8:30 a.m., Thursdays and Fridays. And sometimes Mondays.

CJH: Is there an importance to the days chosen?

S1 Yes, a heavy importance because she worked under concentration. There was a spirit that entered her, it was a brother from Mexico who would stay in her. A brother of about 20 years old and she was a woman of about 60 years old.

CJH: And the spirit was about 20 years old?

S1 Yes. Various spirits would come down and a young man was left working. When she began her work a little girl would read a prayer from a book from behind her, she would pray the Our Father, a Hail Mary and another prayer. The prayers were done by a girl, a girl of about 8 years old. She then stood at the doorway and said: "In the name of God Almighty" and "now we will begin a prayer". She entered and stood in the center of the church, by that time all the people were already praying. Her daughter-in-law and an attendant of hers stood at each side of the table. Her daughter-in-law stood close to her (points to his right side) and the attendant to the side (points to his left side away from himself) so they could write down everything that the spirit said, because she spoke with a spirit, she did not read cards or anything. She had a big goblet that, when she began to concentrate, the water in it began to splash out. The water splashed out and a little scorpion would appear in it like a small animal and it remained in the center of the water, it was like her nahual (animal spirit). When she entered you would get the chills and the church would shake. Everything shook like this. Everything trembled. The flowers would come together, the crown of King San Pascual would shake, baby Jesus would shake and the table would go like this. She would stand in the center of the church. On one side there was a Catholic church named San Juan. It's of the patron Saint John (San Juan) of the 24th day of July. That's why it's called San Juan river. But where her consultation place

was at was a big church like a Catholic church. When she would enter she would come in at 8:30 a.m. on the dot! She entered with nothing but a white dress, normal. She did not wear a necklace or anything she just entered saying: “Good morning brothers at this moment we will begin a prayer, I would like silence please”. Then they would commence their prayers and when they were into the prayer a short while this here (points to the right side of his chest) began to jump like this, it went like this and it would jump back here (points to the back of his shoulders), hard, that’s how her back would get and she was a thin woman. And you could feel something very cold there and everything began to move like this (shakes his hands toward each other to cross them) and everything joined together and the flowers would hug each other and so she would enter and then they would grab her. Sometimes bad spirits wouldn’t leave her alone, there were bad vibrations all around, so they sprayed something, I don’t know what and they burned myrrh incense on the doorway when the spirits would not let her enter. When she entered, she went right in, they would grab her, she would remain standing, her eyes would turn white, white, white! And she was no longer herself. They would seat her at a round table made of Cedar, because that’s how it was supposed to be, a goblet a bit larger than this one . . .

CJH: A table made of Cedar, Cedar wood?

S1 Yes. And she began to work. If you were there just to see, or to mock she would kick you out. If the person was there only to get something from her she would not attend to them. She knew what you were there for, what you were not there for and why you were there. There were many Evangelists, Protestants and people who were just there to know, to see if she really knew anything and she would say: “You know what, get this number, that number and that number and take them out of here”. There you could enter at no charge, the only charge was for a yellow votive candle (veladora) made in a recycled glass, she would put on them cinnamon, incense, she added a type of cinnamon oil, and sandalwood, and she covered them with papel de china (a type of paper) that is transparent paper of different colors. These candles (veladoras) smelled beautifully and they were very miraculous.

CJH: And that is the only thing that she sold?

S1 It’s the only thing she did. It was what they paid. They had a box, a restaurant and a hotel because many people would come. Right now I want to buy that place, they’re selling it, but it costs a lot of money. They’re selling it. But there is a strong force, it’s enchanted. Everything moves around when she begins to work, they sit her down and she begins to say things: “Let one person enter first, number 1” and she begins to tell him where he is and what he’s doing. She’ll say names, homes, tells you what’s in your home and everything. She goes there, for a moment she goes there.

CJH: And what’s the name of the woman again?

S1 MLS.

CJH: MLS.

S1 Yes. Camino Viejo SS.

CJH: Camino Viejo SS.

S1 San Juan river. Yes. The temple of sister MLS.

CJH: Do each of these candles correspond to each of the persons that guide you?

S1 They are for them.

CJH: All are for them?

S1 Yes. MLS, first and foremost God, then sister MLS, Brother R, BFG, Brother F F, and Sister C. The name of my brother R and my mother whose name was RF and F O (?), my grandmother. Yes, and it's with them that I work. If I ask them to cure someone, I can cure them.

CJH: So they are the ones that always help you?

S1 Yes. I am working with them and always with San Simon from San Andres Itzapa and Zunil.

CJH: He has a lot of people he works with, I can't remember all their names, but these candles and everything is all for them and he honors them all the time today just happens to be a day that we caught him. They are here now! And usually he doesn't have this out when we come but today they are here.

PP: Did he tell you who each one was?

CJH: Yes, he did. More than once he did, I just can't remember everybody's name, but the one lady that he was just talking to me about, she's really powerful and he says that he wants to buy the place where she used to do her divination because he says it's enchanted.

PP: Is that MS?

CJH: MS.

S1 Yes, Sister MLS.

CJH: Now that she is no longer there is the place still enchanted?

S1 Yes, the place is enchanted because she left, she left. According to the people she left, but she is still there. No one remained there because her children don't know anything. No one remained there. No one remained there except a daughter-in-law, but she doesn't know. She doesn't know what she (MS) knows. But around her final days she was about 60 years old and her husband died at 60 years then a son died in an accident, then the other died in another accident and then another died and only one son remains, like two, two sons have remained.

CJH: She died.

S1 She died. She died because she was already grown, but when she died it was as if a president had died for the poor people. If you were to see her right now in the afternoon your business would be full! If you were ill she would have gotten you up and eating by now. One meeting with her.

CJH: Getting an appointment with her for this research would have been difficult.

S1 Yes, maybe you would have gotten an appointment, but because she is enchanted, I am not enchanted. Enchanted are those who are involved with, like involved in an enchantment of the mountains, maybe they turned someone in, in order to be involved, that's why they were very good and may God let them rest in peace because they are very, very good. They were and are because they still work.

CJH: When you speak about turning someone in to become enchanted, my grandmother has spoken to me a lot about that, but I have never understood.

S1 Okay, let's say you want to be the owner of the blue building across the street, what you do is take blood from five of your fingers and you place your fingers on an infernal book.

CJH: An infernal book? What type of book?

S1 It's an infernal book that only contains bad things. One of these days I will show it to you, I have it. Okay, you place your print on the book with the blood of your pricked fingers. Then you have to turn in what you love most, what you love the most.

CJH: What I love the most is what I have to turn in?

S1 You have to turn in a child or two depending on the deal you make with the enchantment, because it is a person, it's a spirit with whom you have to speak with.

CJH: And how do you give something over? Do you give it over with words?

S1 No, you have to bring it (the person) or they come and get the person. If they don't pick the person up alive, he/she will die. That's how you turn someone in to the enchantment, all bad things.

CJH: And was she enchanted?

S1 Yes, and people like FF, F, brother R are called enchanters, but they could do a lot. They could get rid of the President that is in office right now because they know how. Let's say that something was going to happen to you on your way somewhere, while she (MLS) was concentrating she would ask for brother so and so to bring a glass of water and she would turn it, in the air she would turn it like this (upside down) in order to stop what was going to occur

because at times you would have been killed or you would have an accident and then you'd end up with her, she knew. Let's say you were leaving here and you were going to have an accident, God forbid anything like that ever happening but let's say, and you stopped to see her (MLS) she captures immediately what could happen to you and she calls forth brothers such and such to bring a glass of water and she turns it over so that nothing will happen and nothing happens.

S1 When she was working she was aware of what was going to happen to those who were there. But if you, let's say that he (points to Patrick) is your husband and you had him bewitched and you wanted to get married to him pretending that you had nothing on him and you asked her (MLS) to cure him, she would say: "You know what, you need to get out, because you are responsible for your husband's condition and he is crying like a dog behind you so get out now because you have him buried in such and such place," that's what she would say. She wouldn't guess, she knew where something was. Yes, that's how she worked. I had not planned on telling you that, but now that I have it's okay. I would like for him to include that in the book.

CJH: He said he would like us to include [the latter information in the book].

S1 So if one day you want to ask the spirits for something it's fine to do so with a white candle.

CJH: With a white candle?

S1 With a white candle you ask for protection or help.

CJH: You ask the spirit?

S1 You ask the spirit. Spirits are persons that existed and were very good and still continue to be good.

CJH: He says if you guys are ever in need, or if anyone is ever in need, what you do is a simple white candle, you light it and you ask them, you plead, you make a plea to them and they're real good because they were clairvoyant and they were enchanted. And how you become enchanted is, he says you have to make a pact, what you do is you take a black book, like black magic, a bad book, and you pierce the tips of your fingers because you need to imprint your print with blood on that book and you have to take with you what ever is most valuable to you, what ever you want you have to take, so if you want children you have to give a child to get a child, so it's a really deep pact. MS and the other, his uncle and the other curandero that was enchanted, they made pacts which is how they became enchanted.

PP: Are they Indians or Mestizos?

S1 Do you want a photo of the pantheon where she is at, I can try to get someone to send it to me. It will tell what she is.

CJH: He says he can get us pictures. But were they Indian?

S1 They weren't Indian, they were half, but sister L was not, she was like an upper class person.

CJH: Was she mestiza?

S1 Yes, she was a person who lived in a mansion.

CJH: She lived in a mansion, he says that she was a person that was like mixed, she wasn't of Indian descent.

S1 She had lots of cattle, trucks, plantain fields, but she would never charge.

CJH: And she didn't charge, the only thing she did was a candle with like oils and cinnamon, it was a prepared candle covered in this really fine china paper, it was translucent colored paper and that was the only thing that she made and sold.

PP: Why yellow?

S1 Those candles are for them, these white ones are for my business.

CJH: These are for his business, the white ones are for them.

S1 Those are to improve business when it is very low. You pray an Our Father and you pray to the Virgin of "Rayos", say one Hail Mary. You pray all this first and then take a votive candle (veladora) and inscribe in it a star with five points, make a hole at each point with a pencil and add a bit of sugar and you take it like this and pour it in each hole. Each hole has 3 parts salt, 3 sugar, 3 coffee, 3 gold powder, and you pray and stick the pencil in.

CJH: And that's for?

S1 It's so my business will prosper.

PP: The pencil?

CJH: He says what you do is make a five point star and each little hole, each point, you add a pinch, as he showed, of the milk, sugar and salt, three of each, three pinches of each.

S1 That's for, for us that believe in this way, the salt is so that a minimum salary never be missing in your house and so that there is always food. The gold is so that money can come in and never be missing, the sugar is for tranquility in your home and the milk is so that you are never without food for your children.

CJH: So all of those things that you put in symbolize what you don't want to lack, like the salt is for what?

S1 So that your home's salary is never lacking, that you always have work, that you always

have food. But it's a small pinch.

CJH: . . . so that you are never lacking your usual salary so you always have food, milk is for food so that you're never lacking that, the gold is for money and the sugar is for what again?

S1 So that there is peace in your home, that everything be calm and sweet.

CJH: for tranquility, everything sweet.

PP: And the pencil?

S1: The pencil is so that there always be work.

CJH: For work.

S1 It has to be a pencil not a pen, it has a lot to do with it, when ever you do something like this it has to be done with a pencil it has better results.

CJH: Yeah, it gives a better result to do things with pencil then if [done with a pen]. Every time you do something, you do it with a pencil not with a pen.

PP: And the avas (type of beans) and beans?

S1 That's so the business always has a lot of money coming in and so that it is always full.

CJH: It's so that the business always has bountiful money and so that it's always filled.

S1 You pray daily, an Our Father a Hail Mary, you pray to God a lot and to brother San Simon and brother Duende so that the day may go well. You put your hands in and do like this and you ask for money, money, money and that the business be well always and you take some in your pocket. You do that every month and then you throw it under a palm tree or somewhere where you don't pass by. It contains lentils, corn, rice, white beans, red beans, wheat and avas.

CJH: It has lentils, corn, rice, the little beans, yeah, red beans, just different grains. And what he did (putting hands in container and praying for money) is what you do for your business.

S1 This is something that the brothers told me to put here.

CJH: His guides told him to do that.

S1 talks about who he prays to and who people usually pray to

PP: Deceased brothers and sisters?

S1 Yes, deceased ones. The deceased ones are the ones that work.

CJH: And you always have to pray.

S1 You can't ask someone that is alive, like me for instance, you can't light a candle for me to help you because I'm still alive. When I die if someone wants to light a candle for me since I would have been someone who helped that will be fine, but since I am alive you can't do that yet.

CJH: He says since he's alive nobody can light a candle and ask for his guidance and help but when he dies if somebody chooses to light a candle and ask for his guidance and help then that can be done but it's only after you die that somebody can light a candle and ask for your guidance.

S1 I don't know if they want that other recipe that I have.

CJH: You want another recipe from him? He's going to explain.

PP: Sure.

S1 Okay it's this, can you pass that to me please?

CJH: Rue

S1 Yes, take this because it's in my way. Okay, this is so that there are no problems in your home, so you always have money in your pocket, so that you never lack money and you can always be within reach of everything. Okay it contains this, that they call, that many places know it, but we call Altamisa, you need seven tips of it . . .

CJH: You have to have 7 stems.

S1 . . . 7 rue stems.

CJH: . . . 7 rues.

S1 . . . 7 parsley stems.

CJH: 7 parsleys.

S1 Okay, 7 rosemary.

CJH: 7 rosemary.

S1 Where is the rosemary, where is it? It's not here, I haven't put it in yet.

CJH: It's not there? Oh, he hasn't put it in yet.

S1 7 rosemary. You add honey and you wash it everyday like this and you massage here (reached for his lower back) after 3 days of preparing this. You massage here on hip when you shower, you wash (hands) like this and wash here (face) [using the water with honey and herbs]

and then you throw the water at door.

CJH: Outside the door?

S1 Outside the door. You mix the water and you take it outside. They call that Altamisa, Santa Misa and other names. This is very good so that your home may always be tranquil and so that there is always money in your home because it always finishes. It's for retaining money.

PP: To be peaceful in the house and to get money?

CJH: Yeah, to have money and to keep everything peaceful, to keep it stable. There's honey in here. He applies that 3 days after he makes it.

S1 [It's made with] tap water.

CJH: It's made with faucet water and honey and 3 days after having this mixture together he takes it and applies it around his back and waist and then he dumps the water outside the door. He dumps all this outside the door.

PP: And the rue and rosemary has to be fresh?

S1 Everything has to be fresh you can't let it get wilted.

CJH: It does have to be fresh, you can't let it wilt.

S1 It's very effective.

CJH: When you throw the water out after doing your ritual of putting it on your face . . .

S1 You have to change it. Every 3 days you have to replace it.

CJH: Every 3 days you have to throw out the water and do you also throw out the leaves in the water?

S1 Yes, but you should never burn it or throw it in the trash, you have to leave it some place where you will not be at.

CJH: You have to never burn it or throw it in the trash, you just have to leave it some where you don't go, by a palm or something, yeah.

S1 That's all I had in mind for today, I don't know what else you had in mind.

CJH: That's what he had in mind to tell us today, is there anything else you guys want to continue with?

S1 I have this thing that I always give for cholesterol, since cholesterol has to do with the blood. When blood thickens it's that there are problems with cholesterol or the heart so what I tell them to do is to eat a carrot and an apple, a juicy one not the soft ones it has to be crisp and watery, in the morning. That is what I give.

CJH: One carrot and one apple.

S1 You just wash your mouth [and then eat it]. It's for cholesterol so that your blood thins out and runs better. That is what I give so that cholesterol does not affect people.

CJH: He has a remedy for lowering cholesterol levels. If your blood is thick, he says, and fatty because you have high cholesterol what you do is, what he tells people is that you take an apple, it's got to be a fresh apple, it's got to be crunchy and just lush and a carrot and you eat that in the morning everyday and that will lower the cholesterol. Is this a recipe that . . .

S1 . . . that I have, I have (points to his head; I think he means it's his idea).

CJH: Are there many people that need that recipe?

S1 Many. Yes, because a lot of people suffer from cholesterol.

CJH: More men than women?

S1 The same, both men and women are affected alike.

CJH: Old or young?

S1 Yes. Some say that it's because a person is too fat but that's a lie because even if they are fat that doesn't make everyone sick with heart problems and then there are people who are like you and they have heart problems. Because I know people, friends of mine, who say it hurts here or this is hurting me here or I'm feeling a pain here so I tell them to go to the doctor because it's dangerous and they've gone and doctors have cut them from here down (from throat down). When I see them later they are in critical condition and the veins are not pumping blood to the heart. And some people are very thin so when it comes to the heart anybody can be affected.

CJH: Okay, he says that when it comes to heart problems or anything it doesn't matter if your fat or not, he says that overweight is associated with heart problems and cholesterol and he says that's not true because you could be thin, you could be thin or you could be fat and have cholesterol problems or heart problems, it doesn't matter. When you get that, you get it. But that's what he recommends, he says, equally to men and women and often.

MOJ: The other remedies? Tell him there's just a few and try to finish them off.

CJH: Okay. I would like to finish asking you about the last ailments on the list. We're almost done with it. We were on number 56 which is liver pains or problem with liver pain. Do you recommend anything for that?

S1 Yes, for the liver, what I recommend is that first, you do not eat hot peppers or drink beer, or coffee and sodas because that inflames the liver. What I have noticed about the liver is that it becomes inflamed or it becomes punctured (full of holes) because a person eats spicy food or drinks too much alcohol, pure liquor. When people have a punctured MLS liver they vomit constantly and their stomach becomes inflamed so what I recommend is that they take the slimy part of the aloe plant with a bit of sugar and put it in a glass and drink it. Aloe, that's aloe. You use the slimy part of the aloe. And you can take a prickly pear, peel it, peel it like this and drink it with the aloe mixture.

CJH: The prickly pear is like?

S1 The prickly pear has spines and comes from Mexico and there are various types of aloe. The one that is good is the one that is on top of my thing there, it's a large one. That's the good one.

CJH: As far as quantities, how much aloe?

S1 Look, when a person is very ill aloe is very beneficial and is even good for gastritis like the type that I think is called "gastritis sangronela", the type that bleeds. Aloe is very good for that. There are people who peel it, I tell them to just drink its juice, but some blend it and drink it for about 8 to 9 days and they get well.

CJH: Okay but let me ask you, do you treat more men than you do women?

S1 More men.

CJH: More men. What are the reasons for that?

S1 I would say because they are not careful, women are more careful with that. Not all women drink, men do. That's why they (men) have that.

CJH: But you don't cook it? You just put them together?

S1 No, no, it's fresh, it's raw.

CJH: How many people would you say that you recommend that to?

S1 They come often, but I don't get involved in tending to that problem, I mostly just treat people who are my friends and with whom I will not have problems.

CJH: Do you have an example of a person whom you treated and made well. Do you have a story of such a person?

S1 I have cured many people. Many. I wish I had a video camera, but I don't have anything to record or photograph anything. Before people would leave a lot of these things, but now they don't because sometimes the police comes and gives me problems. People leave pictures,

but I tell them not to because if they (the police) find me with a lot of pictures they'll ask why I have so many pictures. Yes, so that's why I don't ask for pictures any longer. It's very bad.

CJH: He says mostly men because of drinking, he says he doesn't really get that many requests on it, he pretty much just treats people that he knows, that are his friends or people he just knows well and it's aloe and "tuna" one of the big cactus leaves and you take that and add some sugar and drink it and he says that some people take the whole aloe leaf just clean it up and shave the little spiny parts off and then blend it and drinks it for 8 days, but he says for people to cut it open and take the meat part from the inside from like a stem.

PP: Okay, the next one.

MOJ: Mumps.

CJH: Mumps, mumps, what are mumps in Spanish? Are mumps when you get the?

S1 Tonsils, tonsils, tonsils, tonsils. Anginas, I think they call it.

CJH: Yes, Anginas or any type of angina infection.

S1 Something to reduce inflammation?

CJH: Do you recall the illness that children get?

S1 (Paperas) Mumps!

CJH: (Paperas) Mumps!

S1 Mumps is something that causes inflammation here (points to neck area) and they say some die from it.

CJH: Yes, have you treated that?

S1 Not here but in Guatemala. I don't touch kids here only in Guatemala. You get a tomato, you slice it, must be fresh and hard. You get a tomato and a potato and you put it on you (neck) with pig lard.

CJH: Tomato and potato with pig lard.

S1 Yes, you tie it like this with a thing right here.

CJH: How do you put that on you?

S1 You put it on like a bandage and you put a tomato here then a potato then a tomato [and so on]. Since that (mumps) is heat and infection this (treatment) will suck it out.

CJH: And the pig lard?

S1 Gargle with lemon and salt for older people, when it's a child a rub with lemon (points to neck), but not a lot.

CJH: How many times a day?

S1 Three times a day.

CJH: Three times a day. While applying that (treatment) as well.

S1 Yes, what goes here (treatment). It's pig lard, tomato and potato, sliced and raw.

CJH: Three times a day.

S1 Three times a day, because that is like a fever here (neck) and that removes the infection.

CJH: How many days does that last?

S1 Some people take long to recover and even become very ill because they say that it goes down to their parts. They say their parts become inflamed and they die.

CJH: Their private parts fall out?

S1 Yes, the private parts fall off. It happens to men and women and they say they die. They can't lift anything, they have to be like this, stiff, and can't lift absolutely anything heavy; you can't make strength or anything.

CJH: And when you were in Guatemala and had a chance to treat this illness, did you treat more children or adults?

S1 There, I treated kids. I like treating kids. I cure children quickly, but not here. Here there are too many problems treating kids. Here, I cure "empacho", is that bad?

CJH: No, "empacho" is not bad.

S1 Yes, I have treated a lot of kids with empacho. Let's say you bring your child and you say my child is very ill, I grab him and do this to his stomach (with the back of his right hand, he taps the palm of his left hand four times) to see if he has empacho. I take out the empacho and when kids do not eat and are malnourished I give them something to drink and they eat.

CJH: Are there people here who maybe ask you for mumps remedies?

S1 Yes, many. There are a lot of people who suffer from anginas. Over there [in Guatemala], they call it (paperas) mumps.

CJH: Does it affect adults too?

S1 Children, adults, elderly women and men too.

CJH: He says here he doesn't treat children, pretty much if he treats children it would be for empacho but in Guatemala was where he mostly treated children and he said that he likes treating children and he used to treat children a lot in Guatemala. So what he does is you have tomato, potato, you slice it, it's got to be fresh. Slice a tomato, slice a potato, slice a tomato, slice a potato, you put it in like a cloth with pig lard and you put it on your mump area.

S1 Here, here because it gets like this (inflamed) and if you look inside the mouth you can see that the throat is inflamed.

PP: Does he feel bad that he can't do a lot of the things here that he would do in Guatemala?

CJH: Do you feel bad sometimes, because you can't practice here the way that you would like?

S1 Very bad! Very bad, because if I was free in this country and I could be next to the general hospital, I would cure more than the hospital.

CJH: He says that if this was a free place, a free country and he was next to a hospital or something he would treat more people than hospitals.

S1 The only thing that I can't do is perform surgeries, but I can cure a lot of things. Plus, I can stitch wounds and mend broken bones.

CJH: Really, did you stitch yourself (asking about the scar on his forearm)?

S1 No, not this one because it was too big, but I can do this and put on a cast too. I know if you are broken, sprained, if your skin is ground up and all that. Here, the doctor is quick to put a cast on you without knowing if you have a broken bone or sprain. For instance if you are walking and your foot slips over some little thing your bone might have moved and the doctor will put a cast on you right away. It's like this, this here (points to his wrist), I don't know if they can see me, this is due to the body being too hot, the type of hot that would occur if he was working with something very heavy and then wash your hands with cold water so then they apply a cast to this here and this should not be put in a cast because these are nerves that have become like this, they became knotted because of the hot and the cold. And doctors apply a cast to get rid of that and that does not help. In regard to empacho, maybe it's just here I don't know, but I've heard that a lot of children have died because doctors don't treat it.

CJH: He says empachos are not well treated here by doctors.

S1 They don't treat it. They don't know how to treat that here because it is not recognized here. It's like they don't believe in it, I don't know what they do.

CJH: He says it's like they don't believe in empacho or they don't know what empacho is so

they don't treat it well and he says that he doesn't know for a fact but he's heard people who say that children have died because of empacho because they haven't been properly diagnosed or properly treated.

S1 In our countries if there is no money we don't go to the doctor, we go in search of herbs and we can cure. You can drink it, use it to massage, it's (herbs) for many things, but here we run to the doctor. If you have a huge headache right now, your husband or whoever calls an ambulance that takes you to the hospital and it doesn't help you. Here, I know and I'm not educated. 100 % of medicines contain drugs and they only alleviate. They only alleviate or they take a piece of you from here or there in order to test you. Instead of healing you they are messing you up more.

CJH: He says that doctors kind of make you worse sometimes they, let's say for instance, he says that they test on people, he says that if you have a major headache your husband ends up taking you to the doctor and the doctor will just give you something to alleviate your pain not really take care of it or like they do things to people where like they take a little here, take a little there and make you worse instead of better.

S1 The first thing that they do here is tell you that you have a tumor and even if it's not a tumor they cut you right here (points to head to give example), they take all this off and lift this and when they see that they haven't cured you they give you therapy but you end up messed up right there, they leave you dumb and a few days later you die. That's how it is.

CJH: He says sometimes they misdiagnose and they'll be quick to tell you, "oh, you have a tumor, it's cancer" then they'll start cutting you up . . .

S1 They say they didn't reach the cancer, that it's too advanced and God knows what they do.

CJH: Yeah and then they end up telling you "Oh we just couldn't reach it, it was already too advanced, can't do anything about it now, you're just going to die.

S1 Look, what happens here to women is that they are told that they have cancer in the womb, it's these little rocks that get stuck to the womb and they say it's cancer and they go and, I don't know how they do this, but they remove the womb and cut it. That's what they do and women are left in really bad shape when this gets done to them. I have heard that from women here. They say they get cysts (quistes), they are little.

CJH: He says, one of the things that happens a lot to women here is that they're misdiagnosed and doctors are like, "Oh you have cancer" and what it is, is not cancer it's like a little rock.

S1 They are little rocks like lumps in the flesh.

CJH: They are like little bumps that you get in your flesh, in your womb and doctors misdiagnose it and say, "Oh you have cancer" and then take a woman's uterus out and cut it all up or what ever.

S1 But they scrape it or take it out and that is ugh because to be scraped on the inside is very dangerous. In our countries there are things you can drink and that cures us.

CJH: It's really dangerous what they do. He says in our countries it's different you can like take things or you know, it's different.

S1 Okay is there anything else you want, I am talking about things that I shouldn't talk about.

CJH: No, no, no, don't worry these are things that are talked about all of the time.

PP: What was he showing us on his wrist?

CJH: Oh, he was showing tendons, I guess like tendons, it's a little like bumped up. He says that that happens from, like if he's been doing a lot of hard labor or something, like I have a little vein popping right there.

S1 That comes from working very hot, if you are in doors. It's like those women who are making tortillas or are cooking and suddenly they leave that area. Ugly things also appear on their face or head when they leave the room and their body is hot.

CJH: It's just one of those hot and cold things like he told us before where if you did a lot of hard labor and stuff and then you go and wash your hands in cold water then that makes the shrinkage, but he says doctors end up thinking, "Oh, something's broken, something this, got to cut". They put a, what is that, a cast.

PP: They just don't understand the body.

CJH: Yeah, that's what he says and so he says like the women who are working hard at work in doors doing a lot of this work and your muscles are hot and then you go and you touch something cold and then you go and you touch something cold or you wash your hands in cold water then that has the same kind of effect.

MOJ: Ask him if we've asked him about uterine hemorrhage, if so let's move on to warts.

CJH: Have we asked you about hemorrhage? Uterine hemorrhage?

S1 I told you guys about that. Is it vaginal?

CJH: Yes. Vaginal.

S1 I told you about that.

CJH: Yeah we did talk about hemorrhage. Warts, I love these. Warts.

S1 You remove it with beans and I have something else but it's the milk of a tree called piñon.

CJH: Piñon.

S1 Yes, you know it? It's found at ranches back home. There's a lot of it in ranches. It removes warts and what they call "papilones" that I know men get, that they get right there (penis).

CJH: Okay, that removes both types, okay. What is it again?

S1 Yes, that's where it breaks out. It's "papilon", something that comes out on a man's parts and it erupts. Here I think it's called syphilis. Yes, and it's not something that they cure here but back home it's cured.

CJH: And how do you cure the warts again, you just put that plant on it, what's it called again?

S1 Yes, you do this to it and put it on.

CJH: Okay, what's the name of the plant again?

S1 Piñon.

CJH: And what other remedies do you have?

S1 There is a secret, you pass 7 beans on the area like this, you tie it in a bag and throw it away. The person who picks it up will get it, they catch it.

CJH: I used to have them on my feet. He says that there's a secret to it, there's a fruit, it's kind of like a fruit . . .

S1 It's not a fruit. It's something that you find in ranches where there are cows.

CJH: Yeah, I don't know what it is but it's this thing that you find it where there's cows and agricultural areas and what you do is you take it and you rub it here or you take 7 beans and rub it on the affected area and that makes the warts fall off, or afterwards you take the beans you put it in a little box and then you drop it somewhere and whomever finds it and picks it up they end up having the wart. He also said that that is the same cure for a disease that happens to men called "papilon" which he thinks is called syphilis and he says that that's a cure. If they get warts, if men get warts on the penis or something, you just rub that on there also and then it makes that fall off, not the penis, the wart.

PP: So it could be genital warts.

CJH: Genital warts, yeah.

S1 It's like an eruption, it's something that's infected and the skin breaks out.

CJH: You know what, he says that maybe the name of it is not syphilis but genital warts.

S1 No. Women from the streets give you these.

CJH: He says that's what street women pass it on to men, it's like a venereal disease.

PP: So it's a venereal disease.

S1 That's what they call it here, I think.

CJH: Are there people here who tell you that they have it?

S1 There are a lot of people, but I don't get involved with any of that.

CJH: With warts. He says he doesn't get involved.

S1 Because he says if he had permission here or if it was in the person's country he would but not here.

CJH: He says in his country it would be different, but not here. Have we asked you about cancer?

S1 I don't cure cancer.

MOJ: Inducing labor?

CJH: And when women are going to have a baby and they need help with the child coming out is there anything for that?

S1 Yes, you rush it. Let's say when a woman starts having her pain, she has this thing called the fountain (la fuente), they say it's a bag of water. I can do this because my grandmother was a midwife (comadrona). Okay they call that the fountain, but there are people who put their hand in to break the fountain. That's bad because it has to break itself. It has to come down by itself so you take a lot of chamomile and put it to boil- dried chamomile, and you add an herb called "cola de ardilla" (direct translation is squirrel's tail), it looks a bit like apazote or cilantro, there's a lot of it growing on the streets of Vermont, so you boil that and that shoots the baby out.

CJH: You just boil that?

S1 You boil that and drink it hot.

CJH: How many times?

S1 Or you can drink a beer blended with a creole chicken egg.

CJH: Do you have to take more than one beer?

S1 No, just one and it has to be hot.

CJH: And the tea?

S1 That you have to drink a lot of because it opens the needles of a woman's hips.

CJH: And have you given those recommendations to anyone here?

S1 No.

CJH: He doesn't do any of those recommendations, but he does have a cure for inducing labor and he takes a plant that looks like parsley or cilantro I mean and it's called "cola de ardilla", tail of a squirrel and chamomile and you make a tea and you have to keep taking it and taking it because that's going to make the woman's labor induce. He says his grandma was a midwife and so he knows about this because of her and some people practice putting the hand up the area and piercing the bag with your hand but your not supposed to do that that's bad because it has to break by itself, he says.

PP: Is it a partera?

CJH: "Comadrona partera"

S1 Partera.